

Documenting Impacts



THE UNIVERSITY
OF ARIZONA

Vision

- CALS-CE is a vital national leader in creating and applying knowledge to help people build thriving, sustainable lives, communities and economies.



Old Main, 1891 on The University of Arizona Campus

Mission

- To engage with people through applied research and education to improve lives, families, communities, environment, and economies in Arizona and beyond.



It's Not Just Semantics: Outcomes (Impacts) vs Outputs

- **Outputs** are programs, training, and workshops
- **Outcomes** are knowledge transferred and behaviors changed



Why Impacts?

- Funding
- Accountability
- Outreach
- Partnerships
- Media Coverage
- Validation
- Improved Effectiveness
- Increased visibility
- Enhanced credibility
- Shared knowledge



Other Uses of Impact Statements

- Annual Reports
 - Legislative briefings and constituent letters
 - Website and social media content
 - Searchable databases
 - Speeches and presentations
 - Displays and posters
 - Newsletters
 - Press releases
 - PSA's
 - Background information for various groups
 - Grants and funding applications
 - Federal reports
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Know Your Audience

- **Why** you did what you did
- **How** you did it
- **What** the impact was

Question: Who Cares? So What?



What is Impact

- The measurable difference a program makes in the lives of others.
- Can be social, economic, and/or environmental.
- Tend to be long-term achievements.
- May be positive, negative, or neutral; intended or unintended.



- **Economic:** A new integrated pest management program cut application of pesticides by 15 percent, resulting in average annual savings of \$2 per acre.
- **Environmental:** The decrease in pesticide use reduced the measurable amount of pesticide in runoff by 9 percent.
- **Societal:** Typically, 50 percent of first-time offenders re-enter the correction system within seven years. Of youth offenders who participated in the 4-H program, the number was just 10 percent.



What is Not Impact

- A long, detailed, technical account.
- Descriptions of process, activities.
- Numbers of people reached, acres served, meetings held.
- The same as outputs.



Impact Topics




Writing for Impact

Before You Begin	As You Write	Writing Tips
Identify the target audience: Who are the key players who can help you meet your goals?	Identify the issue: What was the need?	Write clearly and concisely
Identify the action you want from the target audience	Describe the process	Do not use jargon. Be “user friendly”
	Show impact: the quantifiable social, environmental and or economic outcomes	Use only as much detail as absolutely necessary
	Answer “Who Cares, So What, and Why?”	Keep it short



Example: Nutrition & Physical Activity

Issue: Too many young children are gaining unhealthy weight leading to chronic disease at increasingly younger ages.

- 434 of 459 (94%) of teachers surveyed reported preschool children in their classes were more actively engaged in physical activity.
 - 478 of 492 (97%) of teachers reported preschool children in their classes were more willing to taste fruit.
 - 461 of 492 (94%) of teachers reported preschool children in their classes were more willing to taste vegetables.
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Example: Financial Education

Issue: Because they spend too much and save too little, many people will not have enough money to live securely throughout life.

- Follow-up surveys with participants showed that they increased savings or investment by \$4.1 million. The participants' debt reduction totaled \$1.1 million. The total economic impact of this program in 2009 was \$5.5 million in increased savings, increased investment and reduced debt.

